

Solva Edge Festival

Charity Number 1180538

Introduction

This volunteer policy for Solva Edge Festival (known hereafter as 'Edge Festival') sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers and is relevant to volunteers and trustees within the organisation. It aims to create a common understanding and to clarify roles and responsibilities to ensure the highest standards are maintained in relation to the management of volunteers.

The volunteer handbook gives further details about the support and procedures in place for volunteers.

Our commitments

We recognise volunteers as an integral part of the organisation as there are no paid staff in the charity. Their contribution supports our mission and strategic aims and complements the role of trustees. We aim to encourage and support volunteer involvement to ensure that volunteering benefits the organisation, its clients and the volunteers themselves.

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that trustees are clear about the role of volunteers, and to foster good working relationships between volunteers.

We are committed to offering a flexible range of opportunities and to encouraging a diversity of people to volunteer with us, including those from under-represented groups such as youth, people with a disability, older people and people from black and minority ethnic communities.

We recognise that people have a right to participate in the life of their communities through volunteering and can contribute in many ways. We recognise our responsibility to organise volunteering efficiently and sensitively so that the valuable gift of the volunteer's time is best used to the mutual advantage of all concerned.

Who is a volunteer?

Volunteers are individuals who undertake activity on behalf of our organisation, unpaid and of their own free choice.

The Welsh Government Volunteering Policy (2015) defines volunteering as activity which

- is undertaken freely, by choice
- is undertaken to be of public/ community benefit
- is not undertaken for financial gain

Trustees are volunteers with responsibility for governance of the organisation.

Volunteers may be involved on a one - off, short term or on a longer term, regular basis. They may be involved:

- in the direct delivery of the annual Edge Festival, its set up, operation and closing down
- on our board of management as trustees
- in community engagement to raise awareness of our work
- in one off events, promotional and fundraising activities
- in community venues

Volunteers are valued for:

- bringing additional skills and new perspectives to the charity
- enabling us to be more responsive and flexible in our approach
- championing our cause within the wider community
- enhancing the quality of our work and of the experience of our clients, customers and the community as a whole
- promoting the wellbeing of users of services, other volunteers, local communities and themselves.

Standards of good practice

Our management practice is informed by the Code of Practice for organisations involving volunteers and the Investing in Volunteers Quality Standard for volunteer management.

Roles and responsibilities

A designated trustee (The Volunteer Co-ordinator) has responsibility for the development and co-ordination of voluntary activity within the organisation, including volunteering policies and procedures and the welfare of volunteers.

The volunteer role is based on trust and mutual understanding. There is no enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, for the volunteer to attend or to undertake particular tasks or for the organisation to provide continuing opportunities for voluntary involvement, provision of training or benefits.

However, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged - both of what the organisation expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of the organisation.

The organisation expects volunteers:

- to be reliable and honest
- to uphold the organisation's values and comply with organisational policies
- to make the most of opportunities given
- to contribute positively to the aims of the organisation and avoid bringing the organisation into disrepute
- to carry out tasks within agreed guidelines

Volunteers can expect:

- to have clear information about what is and is not expected of them
- to receive adequate support and, where necessary, instruction
- to be insured and to volunteer in a safe environment

- to be treated with respect and in a non-discriminatory manner
- to receive out of pocket expenses (if agreed with the trustees)
- to be recognised and appreciated
- to be able to say 'no' to anything which they consider to be unrealistic or unreasonable
- to know what to do if something goes wrong

Recruitment and selection

Equal opportunities principles will be adhered to in recruiting volunteers. Opportunities will be widely promoted so as to attract interest from different sectors of the community. Positive action to target recruitment may be used where appropriate.

Information will be made available to those enquiring about volunteering. A risk assessment will be undertaken on all volunteer roles.

Recruitment will usually involve an informal interview; the process will be defined and consistent for any given role - for example the recruitment process for trustees, regular volunteers and for volunteers for one off events will be tailored in each case and may differ from one another.

For roles which involve care giving and/or sustained and direct contact with young people or adults at risk, volunteers will be required to have a full DBS disclosure check which will be arranged by the organisation. DBS disclosures are dealt with in the strictest confidence. A criminal record is not necessarily a bar to volunteering.

Induction and training

Volunteers will be given induction and training appropriate to the specific tasks to be undertaken.

Support and supervision

Volunteers will be offered support and supervision as appropriate and this is discussed during induction. Arrangements vary according to the volunteer and the role undertaken.

Recognition

Volunteers will be given the opportunity, where relevant, to share their views and opinions with the organisation's wider trustees, at committee meetings etc.

Formal recognition of the contribution of volunteers is expressed through annual reports, website articles and social media

Dealing with problems

The organisation aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. It seeks to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly.

We will attempt to deal with any problems informally and at the earliest opportunity. All volunteers will have a named person to whom they can turn in the

case of any difficulty. Where informal resolution is not possible, the organisations 'Settling differences' policy will be adhered to.

Volunteers will be made aware of the organisation's complaints policy and how to use it. They will also be made aware of how inappropriate behaviour by volunteers will be addressed by the organisation.

Expenses

Volunteers will be given clear information about what expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim.

Moving on

When volunteers move on from volunteering with us they will be asked to provide feedback on the volunteering experience by way of an exit questionnaire. They will also be given the opportunity to discuss their responses to the questionnaire more fully.

Volunteers who have remained with the organisation for at least 3 months will have the right to request a reference. Volunteers will be supported to move on to other options.

Organisational policies relevant to volunteers include Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, Confidentiality, Social media, Safeguarding, Complaints, Settling Differences.

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Person responsible: Ifor Thomas/Patrick Nash

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